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-\* Google Ends Support for IE6! \*-  
-\* House Bill To Bolster Cybersecurity \*-  
-\* UN Calls for Treaty To Prevent Cyber War! \*-

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->From the Editor's Keyboard

"Saying it like it is!"

"-----"

When you live in New England, you always pay attention to the various weather reports on the news - always! And, when you hear "severe winter watch", you really pay attention. That usually means that we're going to be getting one helluva storm soon. But, thanks to the jet stream and frigid temperatures, that severe snowstorm will stay south of us while dumping up to (and in some places more than) two feet of snow over the next couple of days. So, better get in your well wishes to Joe fairly soon because he's going to get buried in a lot of snow soon!!

It's been another long week here - pretty much the same work schedule for the past few months. By the time I get out of work late Friday afternoons, I'm wiped out. It's difficult to put myself in a creative-writing mood and talk about "serious" topics. It's just hard to get, and remain, focused. It takes almost everything that I have in reserve to put the issue together, much less add creative thoughts! So, I hope that you will bear with me for yet another week. You'll know it once I get a good burst of creative energy!

Until next time...

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
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Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, another week has come and gone, and things haven't changed much. This week I want to talk about a subject that's near and dear to my heart... NASA. And no, that's NOT a place in the Bahamas. [grin]

Specifically, I want to talk a little bit about NASA's budget. The President's budget came out a couple of days before last week's column. I like to take a little time to look at the numbers myself and sort of extend out what it might mean for the future.

First of all, it's important to remember that NASA isn't a company and isn't in a 'regular' type of business. All of what NASA does is on a

timeline. Nothing is just a one-lump-sum-on-delivery kind of thing. It takes years, sometimes decades, to bring a project to fruition. You can't just say "okay, we're gonna go to the moon" or "Yeah, let's go see what the Oort cloud is all about". No, you have to figure out HOW to do what you want to do, have someone build whatever it is you want to use, and then test, test, test. Look at the Mars rovers. We're talking about remote controlled buggies that were designed to last 90 days on an obscenely cold and dry almost airless world, no closer than 62 million miles and sometimes as far away as 236 million miles away. At that distance, it's hard to get the Maytag repairman to fix things that might go wrong, so those little machines have to built tough and reliable. And they certainly were, since they outlasted their original missions by almost six YEARS! So yeah, it takes time to get things proposed, designed, built, tested, launched, landed and actually used.

Back in the 60's, President Kennedy drove us to land a man on the moon "before the decade is out". We did it. We did it six times. That era spurred a generation of us to become interested in space, in engineering, in computers, in science in general. Then the president, Richard Nixon, axed the program to save money. And we haven't gone back since. And now we've got generations that only are not interested in science, a disturbingly large percentage of them don't even know what it IS. A large percentage of the population has come to think of science as something you can believe in or not. A disheartening state of affairs, to be sure.

You may ask why we'd want to go back again, considering the danger and expense involved, and that's a valid question. There are many answers, ranging from the old mountain climber's retort "because it's there" to the fact that there may be resources on the moon that we can utilize to the idea that the moon is a stepping stone to the next leg of our journey into space. Shooting things into space from the moon is easier than blasting off from the Earth, since the gravity is lower. You can do it with less fuel and, therefore, less weight than from Earth.

My favorite answer, though, is because if we don't someone else will. Already, China, Japan and India are talking about missions to the moon. I'm not particularly worried about anyone 'keeping secrets' about what they might find, but dammit, I want US to be at the forefront. The phrase "We came in peace for all mankind" comes to mind.

But if you want to take a purely dollars and cents view of things, think about this: Someone is going to go back to the moon. Someone is going to claim 'victory'. And I have no doubt but that when other nations begin making serious strides toward landing on the moon, we will want to play catch-up if for no other reason than to not let ourselves "come in second". And rushing to play catch-up is not only risky, it's expensive. We'd be better off starting now. Starting to get ourselves back to where we should have been in the 70's.

And now, now that we've landed our marvel machines on Mars, sent probes to the gas giants, and sent emissaries to the farthest reaches of the solar system and beyond, we need to re-develop not only the ability but the will to reach out a human hand into the vastness of space.

Who knows what we may find out there? That wasn't a rhetorical question. Who knows? Can we even guess what might be waiting for us? We've recently found that there's water and metals on the moon, water on Mars, methane and ethane on Saturn's moon Titan, Europa and Enceladus are covered with water ice. There're all kinds of chemicals throughout the solar system just waiting for us. It's what we decide to do with them

that's important. We could build bases on the moon and build rockets and fuel them without having to bring everything with us from Earth. From there we could go to Mars, again building structures and vehicles, and again fueling them with hydrogen from the water beneath the ruddy surface. While it's got 'more' gravity than the moon, it's still easier to 'blast off' from Mars than from Earth. From there? The moons of Jupiter and Saturn, that explosive methane from Titan providing more fuel. Then maybe out of the solar system all together. Perhaps we can manufacture more effective solar collectors on the moon and use them to help end our dependence on petroleum.

The sun is what powers everything on earth. Well, almost everything. There are things in the deep sea that live off of the nasty hot stuff that spews out of geothermal vents at temperatures way above that of boiling water. But for the most part, everything living on the surface of the Earth depends on the sun. Capturing the energy from the sun in space and transferring it to the Earth would give us all the power we need forever. Well, at least for the next several billion years until the sun has swollen and expanded almost to the orbit of Mars, engulfing everything in the inner solar system. But the farther you get from the sun the less energy you get from it. So if we're to go to Mars, you have to 'work' almost 3 times as hard to get the same amount of energy. But free energy is free energy, right? And the sun is just spitting it out there into empty space every second of every day of every year. It has done so for billions of years and will continue to do it for billions more, well past the point where we can continue to live on the surface of the Earth. You see, as the sun ages, it's getting hotter. Eventually, it'll get so hot that the Earth's seas will boil away and nothing we see around us today will be able to survive. So we'll HAVE to move outward... if we haven't killed ourselves off already.

Perhaps we'll discover a way to turn the cosmic microwave background itself into energy we can use. The Cosmic Microwave Background is an... echo of what we think of as the Big Bang. It's all around us. All around everything.

Remember when microwave ovens first became popular? Remember "Leakage Detectors"? They were little electronic gadgets you ran along the seams of the oven door and, if there was a leak, the needle would jump up the dial. It seemed odd to me at first that these gadgets didn't need batteries. Then it struck me: They're MICROWAVE powered! The energy of any microwaves that were leaking out was what powered them! Now the cosmic microwave background is much much weaker than even the weakest microwave oven, but it is literally everywhere. All throughout the Universe (as far as we know) there is the CMB.. the Cosmic Microwave Background.

But if you want to be a little less.. farsighted, a little less pie-in-the-sky, think about the dinosaurs. Current thinking is that their demise was at least hastened by a comet or asteroid slamming into what is now the Gulf of Mexico. It threw enough dust and smoke into the air to block out the sun and change weather patterns and temperatures. Astronomers estimate that a collision like that occurs once every 60 to 80 million years. The last one... the one that 'killed the dinosaurs'... happened about 65 million years ago.

It would seem to me that, no matter what we end up having to do to protect ourselves, the answer resides out there. Or at least the answer can be found by working on GETTING out there. Maybe it'll be missiles, maybe it'll be painting the space rock with something reflective and

letting the sun's rays push it out of the way, maybe it'll be blasting it with a high-powered laser or something. We can't even guess right now what form it might take. But before we can do anything about it, we have to, first, know it's there and, second, have some clue about what it's made of and a plethora of other things like how fast it's going, what its mass is, what might happen if we blow it up or push it this way or that. And you can't find those things out by NOT looking... out there.

So yeah, I think we should be spending money in space. I think that our future lay along the trajectory that leads out of the solar system. I think it's part of our evolution... hell, maybe even part of some [gasp] intelligent design. It won't be easy, and it certainly won't be cheap, but it's something we're going to have to do sooner or later. If not because we need the resources or to maintain national pride, then maybe to save our pink fleshy butts... either from an ever-warming and expanding sun or from our short-sighed selves.

And if we DO have to do this, we'd might as well start on it now. If for no other reason than to SAVE money. I don't know what it'll be like in the distant future, but inflation is a fact of life now. Things cost more now than they did 10 years ago. They'll cost more in 10 years than they do now. So let's be fiscally conscious and save by starting now, huh?

Did you notice that I did NOT bring up the specter of little green men or lizard-aliens bent on destroying the world? Heh heh... they asked me not to. [grin]

Well, that's it for this week, kiddies. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Xbox Live Killed Off, Somewhat!  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Fallout 3 Heading for Sin City!  
Death Tongue for the Jag!  
And more!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!  
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#### Microsoft Kills Xbox Live for Original Xboxes

Microsoft has decided to stop supporting first-generation Xbox games and consoles on its Xbox Live service, Microsoft disclosed on Friday.

Microsoft "did not make this decision lightly," the company's Major Nelson blog said, but it's apparently final: gamers who used the Xbox Live matchmaking service for games of "Halo," for example, will have to find another way to connect with their friends. The prohibition also applies to Xbox games played on Xbox 360 consoles.

Why did Microsoft make the change? According to Xbox Live general manager Marc Whitten, the company plans upgrades to the Live service that are simply incompatible with the older games and consoles.

Whitten did not reveal the proposed upgrades, but mentioned Microsoft's Project Natal, scheduled to be rolled out by the holiday season of 2010.

I believe we'll look back on 2010 as a landmark year in gaming and home entertainment, and I couldn't be more excited about what we have in store with "Project Natal" and LIVE," Whitten wrote in a blog post.

"We will contact the Xbox LIVE members directly impacted by this change and if this includes you, I encourage you to check your LIVE messages and associated e-mail account over the coming weeks for more details and opportunities," Whitten wrote. "We view you as a partner in this process."

#### Videogame Star "Fallout 3" Heading for Sin City

Videogame star "Fallout 3" is taking its devoted fans to nuclear war ravaged Las Vegas.

Bethesda Softworks on Thursday announced a "New Vegas" chapter in the award-winning franchise will be available by the end of this year. The studio posted a video trailer online at [fallout.bethsoft.com](http://fallout.bethsoft.com).

"'Fallout: New Vegas' takes all the action, humor, and post-apocalyptic grime and grit of this legendary series, and raises the stakes," Bethesda said in a release.

"Fallout 3" was crowned Game of the Year after its release in 2008 and proved so popular that Bethesda has expanded on it with adventures in an array of downloadable software.

A "Broken Steel" addition to "Fallout 3" even modified the end of the original game to resurrect the hero, who had sacrificed himself for the sake of other survivors in the post nuclear war scenario.

"Fallout 3" players start out as a youth venturing out of an underground survival bunker to search for a scientist father and make moral choices shaping his or her destiny.

Players take on quests such as freeing slaves, rescuing hostages, and integrating an elitist survivor settlement.

Conversations players have with in-world characters affect directions stories take, with choices regarding whether to do good or evil determining their reputations, opportunities and allies.

## New PlayStation 3 Show Pits Gamer Against Gamer

In the reality show "The Tester," the top prize is a job.

Sony Corp. is launching the show on its PlayStation 3 on Feb. 18. The premise? Pit a broad swath of video game fans against one another to see who's the best at testing out games.

The winner will get a job as a real game tester at Sony. It's an entry-level job, a way to get a start in the industry.

The show's 11 contestants include a writer from Ohio, a cheerleading coach from California and a used car salesman from Maryland.

Sony says the show is part of its strategy to provide content beyond games on the PlayStation. This includes music, movies and TV episodes.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online - Online Users Growl & Purr!  
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### Death Tongue Announcement

Death Tongue is coming to a Jaguar near you!

DeathTongue Productions is proud to announce its upcoming release for the Jaguar.

Before reading any further click the link in the post above to check out a video. There are both high and standard resolutions for your viewing pleasure. These are captured right off of the Jaguar's video out.

So what will Death Tongue the game be? A kickass game using a modified Doom engine. The game will use all new assets. All legacy assets are property of id Software and will not be used. More info on the actual game will be release in the days to come.

The above video is a teaser we wanted to release so you could see what we have accomplished with our Doom hacking. In the video you see many new textures to replace the standard Doom ones. New sprite assets for things like health potions, radioactive barrels, armour, and most importantly a new enemy in the game. This is to show that we can replace any assets in the game. The only type of asset not replaced in this demo is the level itself. We haven't got around to working on levels yet, but we wanted to get this demo out to you now.

We expect in the coming months to release a small demo that will work with Skunkboards, Flash Carts, Alpines, and possibly BJL and JagCD.

No release date is set yet for the demo or finished product.

We have had a lot of fun working on this. We know how badly the Jaguar community has wanted something using the Doom engine. We aim to bring it to you.

Who makes up DeathTongue Productions? Currently we are two members strong. We have myself doing the coding/level design/sound work. And viMaster doing the artwork/level design/sound work.

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A-ONE's Headline News  
The Latest in Computer Technology News  
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

UN Chief Calls for Treaty To Prevent Cyber War

The world needs a treaty to prevent cyber attacks becoming an all-out war, the head of the main UN communications and technology agency warned Saturday.

International Telecommunications Union secretary general Hamadoun Toure gave his warning at a World Economic Forum debate where experts said nations must now consider when a cyber attack becomes a declaration of war.

With attacks on Google from China a major talking point in Davos, Toure said the risk of a cyber conflict between two nations grows every year.

He proposed a treaty in which countries would engage not to make the first cyber strike against another nation.

"A cyber war would be worse than a tsunami - a catastrophe," the UN official said, highlighting examples such as attacks on Estonia last year.

He proposed an international accord, adding: "The framework would look like a peace treaty before a war."

Countries should guarantee to protect their citizens and their right to access to information, promise not to harbour cyber terrorists and "should commit themselves not to attack another."

John Negroponte, former director of US intelligence, said intelligence agencies in the major powers would be the first to "express reservations" about such an accord.

Susan Collins, a US Republican senator who sits on several Senate military and home affairs committees, said the prospect of a cyber attack sparking a war is now being considered in the United States.

"If someone bombed the electric grid in our country and we saw the bombers coming in it would clearly be an act of war.

"If that same country uses sophisticated computers to knock out our electricity grid, I definitely think we are getting closer to saying it

is an act of war," Collins said.

Craig Mundie, chief research and strategy officer for Microsoft, said "there are at least 10 countries in the world whose internet capability is sophisticated enough to carry out cyber attacks ... and they can make it appear to come from anywhere."

"The Internet is the biggest command and control centre for every bad guy out there," he said.

The head of online security company McAfee told another Davos debate Friday that China, the United States, Russia, Israel and France are among 20 countries locked in a cyberspace arms race and gearing up for possible Internet hostilities.

Mundie and other experts have said there is a growing need to police the internet to clampdown on fraud, espionage and the spread of viruses.

"People don't understand the scale of criminal activity on the internet. Whether criminal, individual or nation states, the community is growing more sophisticated," the Microsoft executive said.

"We need a kind of World Health Organisation for the Internet," he said.

"When there is a pandemic, it organises the quarantine of cases. We are not allowed to organise the systematic quarantine of machines that are compromised."

He also called for a "driver's license" for internet users.

"If you want to drive a car you have to have a license to say that you are capable of driving a car, the car has to pass a test to say it is fit to drive and you have to have insurance."

Andre Kudelski, chairman of Kudelski Group, said that a new internet might have to be created forcing people to have two computers that cannot connect and pass on viruses. "One internet for secure operations and one internet for freedom."

#### US House Passes Bill To Bolster Cybersecurity

The US House of Representatives on Thursday overwhelmingly approved a bill aimed at protecting the Internet and vulnerable computer networks by funding cybersecurity research and training.

"Securing cyberspace is vitally important to both our safety and our national economy," Representative David Wu, a Democrat from Oregon, said following passage of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act.

"We cannot stand by and let the most powerful tool for connecting Americans with each other and the world remain the Wild West of technology," he added.

The cybersecurity legislation, which was approved by a vote of 422 to five, allocates funding to improve cybersecurity in the federal government and the public and private sectors.

It calls for the training of a skilled workforce, cybersecurity research and development and public education efforts.

The US Senate is also considering cybersecurity legislation which contains more sweeping measures.

Passage of the House bill comes less than a month after Google revealed it was the target of a wave of cyberattacks originating in China and threatened to pull out of the country.

It also comes less than a week after the websites of 49 members of the House were attacked and defaced by hackers.

US Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair told Congress on Tuesday that the attacks on Google were a "wake-up call" about the vulnerabilities of computer networks to attacks that could cripple the US economy.

Blair said vital telecommunications and information systems faced threats from "those who would steal, corrupt, harm or destroy the public and private assets vital to our national interests."

Representative Daniel Lipinski of Illinois, sponsor of the House bill, said as "reliance on information technology has increased, so has our vulnerability to cyberattacks.

"Cybercrime is a major problem for the government, for businesses, and indeed for every American," Lipinski, a Democrat, said in a statement.

"This bill will increase the security of vital and personal information by strengthening research partnerships among the federal government, the private sector and colleges and universities," he said.

The legislation notably calls for the National Science Foundation to award nearly 400 million dollars in computer and network security research grants.

The bill is the first major cybersecurity legislation passed since Barack Obama took office a little over a year ago.

In December, Obama named Howard Schmidt, a former Bush administration adviser and Microsoft executive, as his cybersecurity coordinator.

No single US agency is currently charged with ensuring government cybersecurity efforts and US lawmakers had been calling for the creation of a powerful cybersecurity adviser reporting directly to the president.

#### "Alarming" Rise in Cyberattacks at Social Networks

There has been an "alarming" rise in spammers and hackers hunting for victims at online social networks, according to a report released Monday by computer security firm Sophos.

A "Social Security" investigation revealed an "explosion" of spam messages and nefarious software targeting users of social networks such as Facebook and Twitter.

"Computer users are spending more time on social networks, sharing sensitive and valuable personal information, and hackers have sniffed out where the money is to be made," said Sophos senior technology consultant Graham Cluley.

"Social networks and their millions of users have to do more to protect themselves from organized cybercrime, or risk falling prey to identity theft schemes, scams, and malware attacks."

Facebook last month announced an alliance with Internet security specialty firm McAfee to get members of the world's leading online social network to better defend their computers.

"Facebook is by far the largest social network - and you'll find more bad apples in the biggest orchard," explained Cluley.

"The truth is that the security team at Facebook works hard to counter threats on their site - it's just that policing 350 million users can't be an easy job for anyone."

Facebook users whose accounts are breached by malicious software or other cyberattacks will need to have their computers cleansed by McAfee before returning to life in the online community.

Facebook members are also being offered free six-month subscriptions to McAfee security software and then discounted prices for continued service.

McAfee and Facebook have collaborated on a free tool for cleaning up infected computers.

"If we get people's machines this protection, it is better for them, for Facebook, and the Internet as a whole," Facebook director of communications and public policy Barry Schnitt said at the time of the announcement.

The Sophos study found that 57 percent of online social network users reported getting spam in their virtual communities in what amounted to a 70.6 percent jump from the prior year.

Some 36 percent of social network users queried said they had been sent software worms, viruses or other types of "malware" in what amounted to a 69.8 percent leap from the previous 12-month period, according to Sophos.

Sophos's report also indicated that 49 percent of firms allow workers unfettered access to Facebook in a 13 percent rise from the previous year.

"The grim irony is that just as companies are loosening their attitude to staff activity on social networks, the threat of malware, spam, phishing and identity theft on Facebook is increasing," said Cluley.

#### Google To End Support for IE6

Google will phase out support for Microsoft's Internet Explorer 6 Web browser starting in March, the company said Friday.

"Many other companies have already stopped supporting older browsers like Internet Explorer 6.0 as well as browsers that are not supported by

their own manufacturers. We're also going to begin phasing out our support, starting with Google Docs and Google Sites," Rajen Sheth, Google Apps senior product manager, wrote in a blog post Friday.

The announcement comes more than two weeks after Google reported that its servers had been the target of attacks originating in China. Those attacks targeted a vulnerability in IE 6, for which Microsoft has since issued a fix.

Support for IE6 in Google Docs and Google Sites will end March 1, Sheth said in the post. At that point, IE6 users who try to access Docs or Sites may find that "key functionality" won't work properly, he said.

Sheth suggested that customers upgrade to Internet Explorer 7, Mozilla Firefox 3.0, Google Chrome 4.0 or Safari 3.0, or more recent versions of those browsers.

According to StatCounter, IE6 has 18 percent market share among browsers.

#### JooJoo Tablet PC Promised by End of February

Fusion Garage's JooJoo tablet PC is expected to be in consumer hands by the end of February, when it will likely give some indication as to the public's interest in tablets such as the Apple iPad.

According to Venture Beat, Fusion Garage CEO Chandra Rathakrishnan says that not only have the preorders for the JooJoo tablet exceeded expectations, but there has been an increase in inquiries since the debut of the iPad - so it looks like the public may be ready for tablet computers after all (or, at least, ready to try them out).

The JooJoo tablet, which began its life as the TechCrunch CrunchPad, was announced in December 2009. The 2.4-pound touch screen tablet has a 12-inch, 1366-by-768-pixel display, 1GB of memory, and a 4GB Solid State Drive (used to store the OS and cache data). It also features a USB 2.0 port, Bluetooth support, built-in speakers, Wi-Fi, and a Webcam with a mic. The JooJoo tablet also features a fun (and potentially incredibly annoying) color-tinted screen--but don't worry, the color can be changed.

Instead of custom-built apps, the JooJoo tablet uses the web as its primary platform. It also supports Flash and reportedly plays 1080p YouTube streaming videos fairly well. The JooJoo tablet's price point is close to that of the iPad's, at \$499.

While the JooJoo tablet does beat the iPad in a few ways (notably, multitasking, Flash support, and the webcam/mic combo), it also falls short in some pretty major areas. It has a 4GB SSD, but users cannot directly save files to said drive - it's purely an internet tablet. The problem with this, of course, is that the JooJoo has Wi-Fi and Wi-Fi only--there is no 3G option, though Fusion Garage is "not ruling out the possibility of 3G in the near future." Here's a tip, guys--the "near future" had better come pretty soon or people are going to start wondering what the point is of a big Internet-only-device that you can't store music on.

Because the JooJoo tablet uses the Internet as its platform, the lack of an "App Store" is another downside. Sure, you don't really /need/ a

Facebook app when you can just go to Facebook itself, but the Apple App Store is definitely a benefit of having an Apple product. Though some are critical of Apple's extreme vigilance when it comes to apps, recent influxes of malware into other, similar app stores suggest that perhaps Apple is merely being alert. Not only will JooJoo's lack of an app store make it harder for users to use the platform, but the openness may leave the JooJoo vulnerable to outside attacks.

The JooJoo tablet is just, quite literally, the internet in your hands (of course, the iPad is just, quite literally, a giant iPod Touch in your hands), but if Rathakrishnan's report of increased interest in the JooJoo after the announcement of the iPad is true, perhaps there *\*is\** a big market for tablet PCs, regardless of what they do (or don't).

#### Rulings Cloud Issue of School MySpace Suspensions

Federal appellate judges wrestling with whether schools can discipline students for Internet speech posted offsite reached different rulings Thursday in two Pennsylvania cases.

One 3rd U.S. Circuit Court panel upheld the suspension of a Schuylkill County eighth-grader who posted sexually explicit material along with her principal's photograph on a fake MySpace page.

However, a different three-judge panel said that school officials in Mercer County cannot reach into a family's home and police the Internet. That case also involves a MySpace parody of a principal created by a student at home.

And, in dissent, a judge in the first case said his colleagues were broadening the school's authority and improperly censoring students.

"This holding vests school officials with dangerously overbroad censorship discretion," Judge Michael Chagares wrote in refusing to uphold the March 2007 suspension of a Blue Mountain Middle School student. "Neither the Supreme Court nor this Court has ever allowed schools to punish students for off-campus speech that is not school sponsored and that caused no substantial disruption at school."

School boards, free-speech advocates and others had been awaiting the rulings for clarity on how far schools can go to control both online speech and offsite behavior.

"The law was unclear and now it's in a state of chaos," said lawyer Witold Walczak of the American Civil Liberties Union, who argued the Mercer County case.

Similar cases have surfaced across the country, with different rulings, but none have reached the Supreme Court. Judges are therefore left to rely on decades-old Supreme Court case law on the limits of school discipline for guidance.

Lawyer Anthony Sanchez, who represents the Hermitage School District in Mercer County, called the issue ripe for high-court review.

"With technology, ... we're in a very different world than we were when those other opinions came out," Sanchez said late Thursday. He did not

immediately know if the district would appeal.

In the Blue Mountain case, both the district and circuit courts upheld the 14-year-old student's 10-day suspension.

Chagares' two colleagues concluded that her lewd, sexually graphic posting was likely to cause a disruption at school, and could therefore be restricted under prior case law.

The Web page, which used a fake name but an actual photo of the principal, was purported to have been posted by an Alabama principal who described himself as a pedophile and sex addict. The Internet address included the phrase "kids rock my bed."

The principal and other students at Blue Mountain quickly became aware of it, discussing it at school the next day, according to testimony.

"Electronic communication allows students to cause a substantial disruption to a school's learning environment even without being physically present. We decline to say that simply because the disruption to the learning environment originates from a computer located off campus, the school should be left powerless to discipline the student," Judge Michael Fisher wrote in a footnote.

The ACLU did not immediately know if it would appeal, Walczak said.

Both 3rd Circuit panels upheld lower court decisions.

In the Mercer County case, U.S. District Judge Terrence McVerry had ruled that Hermitage School District officials failed to show then-senior Justin Layshock's parody MySpace profile of his Hickory High School principal substantially disrupted school operations.

"The school's right to maintain an environment conducive to learning does not trump Justin's First Amendment right to freedom of expression based on the evidentiary record in this case," McVerry wrote in a 2007 opinion. "Public schools are vital institutions, but their reach is not unlimited."

#### U.S. Teens Lose Interest in Blogging

Blogging by teenagers and young adults has dropped by half over the past three years as they turn instead to texting and social networking sites such as Facebook, a new study shows.

The study released this week by the Pew Internet and American Life project also found that fewer than one in 10 teens were using Twitter, a surprising finding given overall popularity of the micro-blogging site.

According to the report, only 14 percent of teenagers who use the Internet say they kept an online journal or blog, compared with a peak of 28 percent in 2006 - and only 8 percent were using Twitter.

"It was a little bit surprising, although there are definitely explanations given the state of the technological landscape," Pew researcher Aaron Smith told Reuters.

Smith said the report's authors attributed the decline in blogging to the explosion of social networking sites such as Facebook, which emphasize short status updates over personal journals.

According to the study, 73 percent of teens who were online used social networking sites.

He also cited the ubiquity of cell phones. Much of the communication between young people now takes place on mobile devices, which don't lend themselves to long-form writing.

He said teens may be shying away from Twitter because they see it as designed for celebrities, and because of reluctance to put their thoughts on such a public forum when they can post them to their Facebook page instead.

"It was somewhat interesting in the sense that teens tend to be the early adopters," Smith said. "They were the first to use social networking and texting. Its certainly unusual compared to what we've seen with other technology."

Blogging among adults has held steady since 2005, Pew found, but it has dropped among Internet users between the age of 18 and 29 - while rising in those over 30.

"Older people are becoming more comfortable with the online environment and young people in the meantime have moved on to social networking and text messaging," Smith said.

The teen portion of the study was based on a telephone survey of 800 people, aged 12 to 17, that was conducted from June to September of 2009.

#### "Demon Sheep" Haunts Senate Race in California

A bizarre campaign ad by Senate candidate Carly Fiorina featuring what has been dubbed a "Demon Sheep" has transcended California politics to become an Internet sensation, but analysts wonder if it was such a good idea.

The Internet video, which features a man in a sheep costume with glowing red eyes crawling around a meadow, has gone viral - with the official version clocking nearly 450,000 views on YouTube as of Friday.

Since its release on Wednesday, the Demon Sheep also has inspired a Facebook group, Twitter feeds and a T-shirt line.

But political experts say the point behind the three-minute, 21-second blurb, attacking Fiorina's top rival for the Republican nomination, Tom Campbell, as a "fiscal conservative in name only," may have been lost.

"I thought the spot was right on as far as its message, but we're not talking about Campbell's record, we're talking about sheep and devil eyes and everything else," said Allan Hoffenblum, a Republican political analyst and publisher of the California Target Book that tracks state elections.

The spot opens with seemingly harmless sheep grazing in a meadow before turning ominous as a white column rises into a darkened sky carrying a

single member of the flock, accompanied by thunder and lightning.

Much of the rest of the ad is devoted to commentary criticizing Campbell, interspersing his picture with images of sheep, before showing the red-eyed impostor lurking in tall grass, apparently spooking the flock.

Fiorina, a former Hewlett-Packard chief executive, is making her first foray into politics, and her opponents seized on the ad to charge that she is not ready for prime time.

"Carly Fiorina's campaign is in full Mutton Meltdown mode, with an increasingly bizarre fixation on farm animals," Campbell, who leads both Fiorina and state Assemblyman Chuck DeVore in polls, said in a statement posted on his website.

DeVore, who is running third in the race to challenge Democratic incumbent Senator Barbara Boxer in the November election, launched a website for the "society for the eradication of demon sheep from our political discourse."

A spokeswoman for Fiorina called the video a success.

"We're very happy with how effective this controversial and eye-catching web video has been because it's drawn attention to Tom Campbell's record as a fiscal liberal," Julie Soderlund said. "I think you can expect to see more shocking content out of our campaign moving forward," she said. "Stay tuned."

#### Fugitive's Facebook Info Leads to Arrest

Police in western New York say a fugitive all but turned himself in by posting his workplace on Facebook and MySpace.

Police in Lockport passed along the information about 39-year-old Christopher Crego to U.S. marshals. He was arrested Wednesday at a tattoo parlor where he was working in Terre Haute (teh-ruh HOHT'), Ind.

Crego had been wanted since he failed to show up for a sentencing hearing after pleading guilty in the fall to assault. He was also charged with drunken driving, drug possession and using a BB gun to kill birds.

Lockport police posted a thank-you note on Crego's Facebook page saying: "It was due to your diligence in keeping us informed that now you are under arrest."

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